

Offsetting the benefits that would be derived from any project is the cost of its construction. A new facility, despite its high projected benefits, might prove to be unjustified due to the excessive costs involved in construction. The highway costs estimated in this report are based on the average statewide construction costs for similar project types. An estimate of anticipated right-of-way costs is also included. Table 4 lists the proposed Clayton Thoroughfare Plan projects with respect to user benefits, estimated costs, probability of economic development, and environmental impact. Figure 9 is a pictorial representation of the environmental concerns that may influence various Thoroughfare Plan projects.

Comparisons of various projects based on the preceding criteria can be used as a guide in implementing the recommended improvements. Construction priorities will vary depending on what criteria are considered and what weight is attached to the various criteria. Most people would agree that improvements to the major thoroughfare system and major traffic routes would be more important than minor thoroughfares where traffic volumes are lower. To be in the State's Transportation Improvement Program, a project must show favorable benefits relative to costs and should not be prohibitively disruptive to the environment.